

In re: Shimada et al.
International Appl. No.: PCT/JP2004/004912
International Filing Date: April 5, 2004
For: BINDER FOR DOCUMENT

Attn: DO/US

Mail Stop PCT
Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Sir:

The patents listed on the attached PTO-1449 were cited in the International Search Report of corresponding International Application No. PCT/JP2004/004912. A copy of the Search Report is enclosed for the Examiner's convenience. In accordance with the Office waiver published July 11, 2003, copies of the cited U.S. patents and patent application publications are not enclosed. Applicant does enclose copies of any cited foreign patent documents and non-patent literature in accordance with 37 CFR 1.98(a)(2).

(1) DE1179911B

This document discloses a binder for a document or the like having a base portion, a ring that is constituted by first and second ring members and can change in its attitude between a closed ring attitude and an open ring attitude and a switching mechanism for switching between the closed ring attitude and the open ring attitude. In this binder, each of the first ring member pair and the second ring member pair is produced by bending a single metal wire. The binder is provided with members corresponding to a press portion, a support portion, a cam portion, a bearing member and a standing tab etc.

In Figs. 1 to 6, the closed ring attitude and the open ring attitude of the first ring member and the second ring member are specifically illustrated. When the opening lever is in the state shown in Fig. 2, the closed ring attitude is attained by the first and second ring members as shown in Fig. 1. When the cam portion and the first and second ring members are separated apart by a little swinging of the opening lever from the state shown in Fig. 2 (see Fig. 4), a spring member provided below the first and second ring members causes the first ring member and the second ring member to separate from each other, whereby an open portion is formed therebetween (see Fig.

3). In this process, the opening lever changes its state only a little from the state shown in Fig. 2.

(2) Japanese Utility Model Application Laid-Open No. 57-24077

This document discloses a binder for a document or the like having a base portion, a ring that can change in its attitude between a closed ring attitude and an open ring attitude and a switching mechanism for switching between the closed ring attitude and the open ring attitude. In this binder, when the ring is brought to the closed ring attitude to keep sheets of a document in the ring, the switching lever is in a substantially horizontally laid state as illustrated in solid lines in Figs. 1 and 2. On the other hand, when the ring is brought to the open ring attitude for allowing insertion/removal of sheets, the switching lever is in an obliquely standing state as illustrated in chain double-dashed lines in Figs. 1 and 2. In this obliquely standing state, the switching lever is in contact with or nearly in contact with the left ring in Fig. 1.

(3) EP207059

This document discloses a binder which allows filing of a document or the like by opening and closing fixed pins and movable pins using an opening lever. In this binder, it is possible to transfer, in the state in which a binder is in the open position, sheets held by the fixed pins to the movable pins without once returning the binder to the closed position.

To allow the above operation in this binder, the opening lever is moved to three positions, namely, a closing position, an intermediate opening position and a final position (fully opening position). In the closing position, the fixed pins and the movable pins are in the coupled state. In this state, a torque is applied on the opening lever, and therefore the state of the closing position is maintained stably. The intermediate opening position is a stable position of the opening lever that is attained by swinging the opening lever to bring two rolls in contact with an operational bar. In this intermediate opening position, the opening lever is in a space between the movable pins and the fixed pins. The opening lever is further swung from the intermediate opening position through the space between the movable pins and the fixed pins to come to the fully opening position.

According to this document, in this fully opening position, it is important in order to make it possible to insert/remove sheets into/from both the movable pins and the fixed pins that the opening lever is swung enough to a position at which its end extends from the space defined by the movable pins and the fixed pins as with the closing position, namely the opening lever is in a position symmetrical to the closing position with respect to its pivot point.

In addition, it teaches that to attain the intermediate opening position, desired types of stoppers, triangular plastic parts with round corners can be effectively used in addition to the two rollers.

(4) DE19646467

This document discloses a binder which allows filing of a document or the like by opening and closing fixed pins and movable pins using an opening lever. In this binder, it is made possible to transfer a document between swinging bars and binding pins without interference.

To allow the above mentioned operation in this binder, an opening lever mechanism is operated in two steps to allow half opening that had been conventionally known and full opening at an angle of 180 degrees. In the half opening state, insertion/removal of sheets only into/from binding pins is possible, while in the full opening state, insertion/ removal of sheets into/from not only binding pins but also swinging bars is possible.

Positional shift from the closing position (in which the opening lever is at an angle of 0 degree) to the half opening position and to the full open position is determined by relative positional relationship between a control cam that is linked with swinging of the opening lever and a lateral lever that is linked with the swinging bars. Thus, the positional shift is attained by designing the shape of the control cam in such a way that the opening lever and the swinging bars do not collide with each other.

In designing the shape of the control cam, a flat portion 26 rather than a curved surface profile is provided, whereby it is possible to keep the opening lever at the half opening position with a biasing force applied to the opening lever by a plate spring 22. Furthermore, in the full opening position also, the opening lever is kept in that position by a biasing force applied from the upper portion 11 of the control cam and the plate spring 22 with a view to ensure safety of the user.

This document also discloses a technique of attaining the above-described positional shift by appropriately designing the shape of the lateral bar instead of designing the shape of the control cam. Specifically, the control cam has a substantially curved surface shape, and concave portions corresponding respectively to the half opening and full opening are provided on the lateral bar. The control cam is adapted to fit into these concave portions sequentially to realize the positional shift.

In this binder, swinging of the opening lever is controlled only by the relative relationship between the control cam and the lateral bar. In other words, the swinging of the opening lever over an angle of 180 degrees is made possible by uniquely determining the relative

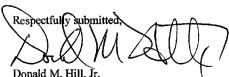
relationship between the opening lever and the control cam by means of the control cam.

(5) Japanese Patent Publication Laid-Open Nos. 35-513 and 35-514

In the loose leaf binders disclosed in these documents, to facilitate lever operation, when fixed binding pins and movable arcuate members are in a closed state or in an open state, the lever extends above the sheets, and the binding pins and the arcuate members are opened/closed only by pressing down the lever.

The Examiner may wish to consider the notations on the Search Report itself regarding the relevance of each item. It is requested that the Examiner consider these references and officially make them of record in accordance with the provisions of 37 C.F.R. § 1.97 and Section 609 of the MPEP. By submitting the listed documents, Applicant in no way makes any admission as to the prior art status of the listed documents, but is instead submitting the listed documents for the sake of full disclosure.

Respectfully submitted,


Donald M. Hill, Jr.
Registration No. 40,646

ALSTON & BIRD LLP

Bank of America Plaza
101 South Tryon Street, Suite 4000
Charlotte, NC 28280-4000
Tel Charlotte Office (704) 444-1000
Fax Charlotte Office (704) 444-1111
Customer No. 00826

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INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT BY APPLICANT

(Use as many sheets as necessary)

Sheet	1	of	2	Attorney Docket Number	045616/317570
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Complete if Known

International Appl. No.	PCT/JP2004/004912
International Filing Date	April 5, 2004
First Named Inventor	Shimada
Group Art Unit	
Examiner Name	

U. S. PATENT DOCUMENTS

Examiner Initials*	Cite No.	Document Number Number - Kind Code (if known)	Issue Date MM-DD-YYYY	Name of Patentee or Applicant of Cited Document	Pages, Columns, Lines, Where Relevant Passages of Relevant Figures Appear
	1	US-4,830,528	05/16/1989	Handler	

FOREIGN PATENT DOCUMENTS

Examiner Initials	Cite No.	Foreign Patent Document Country Code - Number Kind Code (if known)	Publication Date MM-DD-YYYY	Name of Patentee or Applicant of Cited Document	Pages, Columns, Lines, Where Relevant Passages or Relevant Figures Appear	English Language Translation Attached
	2	JP 35-513	01/28/1960	Soennecken		See Attached IDS
	3	JP 35-514	01/28/1960	Soennecken		See Attached IDS
	6	DE 1179911	10/22/1964	Leitz		Abstract Not Available
	5	JP 57-24077	02/08/1982	Tombow Pencil Co., Ltd.		See Attached IDS
	6	EP 0 207 059	12/30/1986	Karl Benz & Co Fab.		Abstract Included
	7	JP 01-244897	09/29/1989	Koloman Handler GmbH.		Abstract Included
	8	JP 02-076799	03/16/1990	Koloman Handler GmbH		Abstract Included
	9	DE 196 46 467	01/02/1998	Ahrens		Abstract Included
	10	JP 2002-178678	06/26/2002	Kokuyo Co. Ltd.		Abstract Included
	11	WO 2005/047015	05/26/2005	Esselte Leitz GmbH & Co., KG.		Abstract Included
Examiner Signature				Date Considered		

*Examiner: Initial if reference considered, whether or not citation is in conformance with MPEP 609. Draw line through citation if not in conformance and not considered. Include copy of this form with next communication to applicant.

Substitute for form 1449/P10 (Revised 07/2005)				Complete if Known	
INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT BY APPLICANT (Use as many sheets as necessary)				International Appl. No.	PCT/JP2004/004912
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				First Named Inventor	Shimada
				Group Art Unit	
				Examiner Name	
Sheet	2	of	2	Attorney Docket Number	045616/317570
OTHER DOCUMENTS					
Examiner Initials*	Cite No.	Include name of the author (in CAPITAL LETTERS), title of the article (when appropriate), title of the item (book, magazine, journal, serial, symposium, catalog, etc.), date, page(s), volume(s), number(s), publisher, city and/or country where published.			English Language Translation Attached
	12	Copy of the International Search Report for PCT Application No. PCT/JP2004/004912, Filed April 5, 2004; Date of Completion June 16, 2004; Date of Mailing July 6, 2004			
Examiner Signature				Date Considered	

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